

THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN

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OURSELVES.

The admirable summary of town improvements, which we publish this week, has been prepared for us by Mr. G. Theron Moore, secretary of the Village Improvement Association. It has been gleaned from the columns of THE CITIZEN in nearly every instance; and, when we remember that this journal itself is one of the "improvements" of the last year, we fancy that we can easily detect the wholesome influence of printer's ink. Six busy men have conducted THE CITIZEN to this result, in spite of their other cares and labors. We have never differed upon any point of policy, and we have been so situated that we have touched affairs on many sides. We have secured by degrees an admirable corps of helpers, and each week we afford to our readers the best work of a well-arranged little company of journalists. The past conditions the future, and we shall not vitiate our record.

THE MARCH OF IMPROVEMENT.

The address of Dr. J. A. Davis, at the public meeting of the Village Improvement Association, which we print elsewhere, was a matter of real happiness to all who were present. Unless we pause to recall the changes which have taken place in Bloomfield within a year, we are likely to underestimate both their number and value. They have been accomplished with so little friction and with such universal approval that their advantage to our future welfare is all the greater. They have in no case inconvenienced any one, and it is a source of gratification that they have benefited nearly or quite every person.

The introduction of water is now an accomplished fact; and the use of this supply is not restricted to a select few. In fact, these improvements have all been of the democratic order. As, for instance, here is THE CITIZEN, a paper which aims to represent the best interests of all parts of the community, and which needs only to be taken into the bosom of a man's family to demonstrate its indispensable value.

The entrance to the village is now a much pleasanter one than it was a twelvemonth since. A decent station, a street with some show of enterprise, and a park which is a proper frame and setting to our noble elms—these are not advances to be despised nor overlooked.

The protection to life and property in case of fire is also a thing for no small thankfulness. We earnestly hope that nothing, personal or political, will be allowed to hinder the full success of the B. F. A. The boys have had, and will have, warm friends in this office.

We again call attention to the field for investment and financial profit to be found in the improvement of our real estate. No place was ever better situated to be built up than Bloomfield is at the present time. The ground which can be brought into market by the opening of a new street or two is truly remarkable. Take for example Fremont Street; or take the Berkeley Hill; or take the neighborhood of Glen Ridge; or take the neglected tract toward Watseking; or the unbuilt portion of Liberty Street, in case of an extension.

The Improvement Association, it is true, can scarcely claim to have done all that has been accomplished already in the matter of building and renovation; but the same parties who were active in it have been the workers in all that has been achieved. We owe to them in every department both energy and expenditure and that, which seemed to some a mere dream when it was advocated first by Mr. C. N. Bovee, has been made exceedingly practical and productive of good.

It simply needs in the future that we keep together in all our plans, conserving the rights of all; being disposed to consider in each improvement the best good of the greatest number, and, with a unanimous and hearty approval, indorsing the deliberations of our most trusted and prudent citizens. We killed the "malaria" bird early in the campaign,

We must now watch its grave against resurrectionists.

TEMPERANCE.

A lull in politics, like the quiet stillness of noonday, may be the precursor of storm or sunshine. For the moment nature is at rest. What the future shall bring is still uncertain. To the sailor upon the treacherous sea it is a time for waiting and preparation. So in these quiet months and years between two Presidential contests, there is a time to watch the political skies and prepare for the onset. Meanwhile some of the old conflicts have come to the surface, occasionally threatening to assume importance in national contests, as they have already been mighty in some of the States. Whether the storm will increase or subside we care not to inquire, but by a dispassionate discussion of some of its phases to prepare for its coming. A serious subject—of this tempest; it has been most grotesquely handled; a sober matter, has been most intemperately discussed; calling for wise and thoughtful consideration, it has been the hobby of fanatics and visionary reformers.

Suffering alike from injudicious friend and inveterate foe, it has known many reverses. What is most needed is not for brave men to lead the onset, but thoughtful men to survey the fields, and see what positions may wisely be taken, and what surely held. The evil results of intemperance are misunderstood by some, and its subtle power is misapprehended by others. A few ask for more stringent laws than public sentiment will uphold; others in utter disgust of all restrictive measures seek to overturn all law.

To unite moderate men in the passage and support of moderate measures, and to teach the rising generation the evils of intemperance, would seem the grandest work which earnest and faithful men could undertake.

For disguise the fact as we will, it is not temperance men who force this subject to the attention of their fellow-men. Daily experience of the misery caused in the families of only moderate drinkers presses the matter upon their attention, while the papers gather and lay before us every morning the ghastly record of suicide, murder and untimely death wrought by its fatal power; and all this in the families of those who would otherwise be industrious, useful members of society. Let whoever will observe its results, and be he drinker or not, he will not fail to allow that a wise restriction, which shall save the younger and weaker members of society from its fatal power, is absolutely necessary.

We will not deny the pleasure which drinking gives—or the contrary, we acknowledge it. Says Thackeray:

"But the true purpose of their drinking—and one that will induce men to drink, or do something equivalent as long as the weary world shall endure—is the renewed youth and vigor, the brisk, cheerful sense of things, present and to come, with which for about a quarter of an hour the drunk penetrated their systems; and when such quarters of an hour can be obtained in some mode less painful to the great sum of a man's life—but, nevertheless, with a little spice of improvidence to give it a wild flavor—we temperance people may ring out our bells for victory."

This subtle power will ever remain to captivate the slaves of drink. Bound in chains only more to be dreaded because so stealthily thrown around its victim, the force of habit making each link doubly secure, the poor man wakes to find himself hopelessly enslaved. And then, the ruin to health, the loss of the cunning of hand, the acuteness of brain, and the self-respect, hope and courage falling into the one grave of debauchery.

Who has not seen its sad result over and over again exemplified? For the sake of family and home, for the sake of national honor and pride, who could deny a reasonable law or hesitate to teach the truth in regard to over indulgence? But what is reasonable? We answer, whatever the moral judgment of the community will uphold. A low license where this alone is practicable; one more stringent where that is desired; prohibition only where the sentiment of the community will enforce it.

To ask more than this is to be unreasonable, and to ask less would be cowardly and foolish.

What then can we expect at home?

Not prohibition, for that the sentiment of the great body of the community in New Jersey will not support, but a license law more and more stringent as the public shall demand. Prohibitory parties here are not alone useless, they are hurtful to the cause of temperance, injuring only its friends and encouraging its foes.

Let us have wise measures and earnest men; above all, let us have sound temperance teaching. We are glad to know that temperance organizations have been formed in some of our Sunday-schools. Let them be conducted with wisdom and moderation, and their good results no man can estimate. That is the only permanent temperance work which secures the heart and conscience of the individual man.

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